

2026 Public Policy Agenda

Business and professional events drive economic growth, empower U.S. small businesses, and support job creation. Every day, exhibitions, conferences, trade shows, and meetings attract exhibitors, attendees, and buyers from across the country and around the world to share knowledge and conduct business in local communities nationwide. In 2025, our industry employed more than 2.6 million Americans, generated more than \$400 billion in direct spending, and drove additional demand for restaurants, hotels, travel services, and Main Street commerce across all 50 states.

The Exhibitions & Conferences Alliance (ECA) is a coalition of leading industry associations that supports public policies that move our industry forward, help us create new jobs, reduce economic uncertainty, safeguard affordability for our small businesses and those we serve, and increase the competitiveness of the U.S. as the premier global destination for business and professional events. These policies will ensure that our industry continues to serve as a growth engine for U.S. small businesses, entrepreneurs, mission-driven organizations, and communities alike.



Trade and tariffs

ECA supports trade policies that increase affordability for the industry and our customers, reduce uncertainty, and help ensure strong supply chains. These include free trade agreements and eliminating tariffs, subsidies, and non-tariff barriers with U.S. trading partners.



International travel

ECA supports international travel policies that lower barriers to attracting international exhibitors, attendees, and buyers to events taking place in the U.S., including:

- Reducing visitor visa interview wait times at all U.S. posts worldwide while modernizing visa processing
- Eliminating unnecessary fees that prevent international stakeholders from visiting the U.S. for events
- Enhancing U.S. national security while avoiding overly restrictive policies that reduce international travel and impact U.S. destination competitiveness



Tax policy

ECA supports U.S. federal, state, and local tax policies that strengthen the competitiveness of our industry and safeguard its many stakeholders, including tax-exempt organizations. ECA opposes all state and local efforts to enact taxes that unfairly harm the industry and our small business stakeholders.



Workforce development

Building on the expansion of the Pell Grant program and Section 529 career savings plans, ECA supports policies that strengthen our industry's ongoing efforts to attract, train, and retain its next generation workers, with emphasis on skilled workforce training.



Operating environment

ECA supports policies that strengthen the overall U.S. industry operating environment, including:

- Reauthorizing federal government-backed insurance programs and exploring new potential risk sharing
- Increasing music licensing transparency and stopping anti-competitive behavior by rights holders
- Establishing a new federal privacy law that harmonizes the existing patchwork of state privacy statutes
- Supporting favorable industry standardization and classification efforts



Sustainability

ECA supports smart decarbonization policies that help ensure the industry maintains control of its collective path to Net Zero, including:

- Encouraging U.S. state and local government efforts that balance sustainability goals and industry feasibility
- Supporting industry efforts to align sustainability standards, guidelines, etc. for maximum impact